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## THE ART AMATEUR.

will be of great use. It consists of a double frame, the two parts of which are hinged together, each having a glass properly fastened in. The plant is to be laid between the two frames, a sheet of thin drawing-paper is laid over one of the glasses on the outside, and a lamp is placed back of the affair so as to throw the shadow of the plant against the sheet of paper, on which it may be traced with a lead pencil. The double frame may be held like an ordinary drawing-board, or it may have a support added, as drawing-boards sometimes have, in which case it can be placed on a table, leaving both hands free. The outline thus obtained is often very suggestive of ornament. It may be gone over lightly with pen and ink, and any number of rough sketches in charcoal may be made over that.

ROGER RIORDAN.

## PRACTICAL LESSONS IN CHINA-PAINTING.

## III.—FIRING—GILDING—TINTING—TREATMENT OF WHITE FLOWERS.

BEFORE giving further directions for painting, I will make some suggestions to those who may desire to fire their own china. The portable kilns of Stearns Fitch & Co., of Springfield, Ohio, have previously been recommended in these columns, and I can fully indorse every good word that has been said for them. I would not advise getting one for amusement, for heating and managing a kiln means work; but if you have a considerable amount of china to fire, and have to express it all to a distant town, then it pays to get a kiln.

A few years ago I bought a medium-sized kiln, such as I speak of, for a class that was formed at a remote summer resort, and we used it every week with perfect success. In the first experiment, just as quick as we looked through the tubes and found that our pieces were losing the red glow and attaining a white heat, we let down the coals. This was too soon for the carmines, but we put them in again at the next firing and they came out without a blemish. After this, we made no mistakes and had no accidents. We had set up the kiln in a large, square garret with rows of low-lifting window-sashes on every side; these gave draught enough to carry off all the fumes of the charcoal. We always finished the firing in time to leave everything safe before night. In the morning the kiln would be perfectly cold and ready to give up its treasures. The directions that come with the kiln are quite sufficient in practical hands.

Of course those who do their own firing do their own gilding; many like to do it in any case. Liquid gilt is easily applied, but when fired it has a silvery tone that is objectionable. Marsching's liquid gold is, perhaps, the best of the kind. When laid on heavily it has a rich appearance, but no preparation of the kind equals the French burnish gilt. The latter is expensive, and the burnishing process is rather laborious, but it can be made to compare with the best that is turned out by the trade. For bands on plates a turning-wheel is really needed—Alling's is excellent for the purpose—but this and other mechanical aids one tries to dispense with if the decorating to be done does not warrant the expense involved. For variety one may copy that Japanese style of gilding, which consists of fringy darts that are conveniently irregular. Also the gilt that is some-

times brought into the designs themselves, requires no mathematical regularity, and as this is likely to be fine lining only, the liquid gilt, in contrast with some colors, looks very well. Always be sure to have the surface on which gilt is to be put perfectly free from color.

I have known persons to buy china having gilt bands on it, and then decorate it. This may save trouble and expense, but usually, gilt-edged sets are not of the most artistic style.

When it is desired to tint surfaces the directions for tinting in clouded effects will be found sufficiently suggestive. Begin in the same manner, but in dabbing use equal force on all the parts, making sure that the surface is uniform. Some strain the prepared tint through a fine wire cloth to get out specks and dust, but this is seldom necessary.

Dry tinting may be done by dusting powder color evenly over a surface that has been prepared with the oil sold for this purpose. The oil must be used sparingly in combination with spirits of turpentine, and be applied and dabbed evenly over, just as the moist tinting is; then the powder color is dusted on from a large blender. This method is not popular; one feels more or less uncertain of its results until after firing, and it is difficult to use a great deal of powder color without inhaling enough to injure the health.

It is best not to carry any designs into the first specimens of uniform tinting. This precaution is especially necessary when colors that are for grounds only are used.

The rims of plates may be evenly tinted (in laying on the color with the brush, draw the strokes toward the outer edge), while the white centre is reserved for a design; or a broad, tinted band may be thrown across quite one side of the centre with flowers brought out on the larger half and stems on the smaller, as if coming from underneath.

When you wish to indulge in clouded tinting again, a very pretty effect may be produced by beginning with an intensely dark color and shading off to a white surface, whereon a design may appear. The design may stray into the tinting, provided its colors are darker and not antagonistic. If these are not the conditions, no touch must be carried over the ground color.

For one experiment of this kind, I would suggest using first ivory black and sepia, then the darkest greens, then grass green, then apple green, which vanishes beautifully on the white. Do not mix any of these colors thoroughly, but let them cloud in by happy chance. The best effect is usually produced by beginning at the top of the piece to be decorated, with the dark colors, and coming down so as to approach white somewhere below the middle. If it is a vase, or some object whose greatest bulge is near the middle, the tinting may be repeated at the bottom, beginning there again with the dark colors. Where the upper and lower tints thus blend off on the white, there is a good chance for designs—sprays or vines, we will say. Any colors may be brought daintily into the apple green; but, of course, with its complementary colors it will produce a neutral. Where this is apprehended, the green may be wiped away before the design is extended. Tips of sprays that run far into the green may be brought out beautifully with violet of iron; it will give the fresh, reddish look peculiar to young growth.

Flat surfaces are much the easiest to tint. When tinting the outside of cups or similar shapes, hold them upside down, and pass the brush toward the inverted top. Practice soon adapts itself to handling various pieces to advantage.

When designs are to be painted directly in tinted grounds, they may be drawn rather strong with india ink, and, when dry, the tinting may be carried over or around, according to the size of the patterns. Then, as the tinting will not obliterate or conceal the design, any part of it may be wiped out when necessary. Be sure that no tinting is left unless it is lighter than the color to be applied and capable of uniting with it without injuring it.

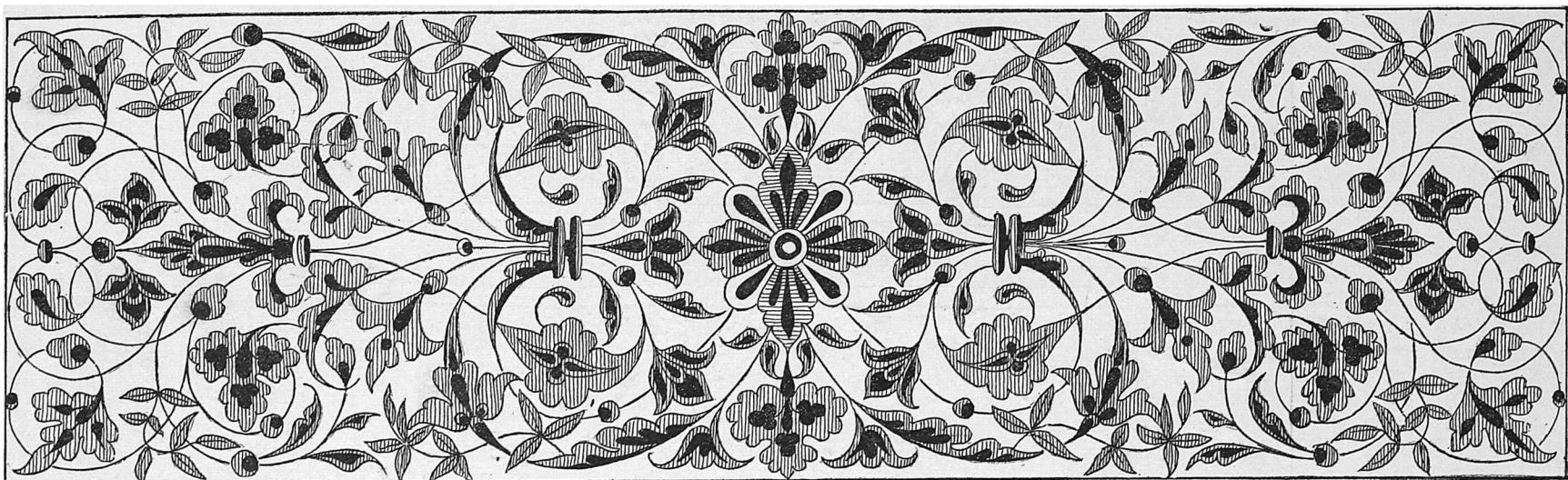
We will now classify floral designs, as nearly as possible according to their colors, beginning with white. One might imagine that white flowers could never be painted to advantage without a tinted ground to relieve them; but shade and leaves may be made to serve the purpose very effectually, and a beginner finds it much easier to work on pure white china. I remember distinctly one of my earliest ventures with white flowers—we are always so anxious about our first pieces in minerals that we cannot forget them. This was the decoration of a cup and saucer with sprays of narcissus or "poets' cup." The saucer had three slanting sprays, each tip rising and extending over the stem of the succeeding one so as to vaguely suggest a wreath. The cup had a spray beginning on each side of the handle, and reaching out toward the opposite front. The long, paralleled, veined leaves were very obedient to the brush, curving and occasionally turning over their tips, always adapting themselves to the needs of the dainty white flowers. The latter were shaded with the mixture of black and sky blue which has been given for gray tinting, and their deep cups edged with the prescribed mixture of carmine and orange yellow. Faintly indicated leaves and shadowy effects were laid in with that delicate neutral tint which is made of carmine and apple green.

Lilies of the valley may be treated in a similar way: the leaves of these always grow so as to relieve the greater part of the flowers. The fine little buds that are quite beyond the leaves may be brought out with apple green and mixing yellow, shaded slightly with a touch of black. These flowers are rather unyielding for anything except pitchers.

White roses, lilies, and peonies, are all very rich and effective on large pieces with tinted grounds. Azaleas may be made very beautiful; their transparent delicacy admits of fine gradations of shade. Orange blossoms are opaque, but they are always handsome. To give their wax-like character, use thin "jaune M. à meler" occasionally deepened with "jaune jonquille." Sometimes flowers nominally white have enough color to stand out from the surface of the pure white china without depending very much upon leaves and shadows. The tuberoses is an example.

For highly-finished china ornaments, it is sometimes desirable to touch the highest lights of flowers with "blanc Chinois" (Chinese white) or "blanc fixé" (permanent white). A little may be taken on the point of a brush and laid with a single touch. It is best to reserve these lights for a second firing, when the temperature need not be so high, else they are liable to blister and cleave.

H. C. GASKIN.



DECORATIVE PANEL BORROWED FROM OLD PERSIAN TILES; ALSO A SUITABLE MOTIVE FOR APPLIQUÉ EMBROIDERY.